

REPORT

Of the Committee on Military Affairs, in relation to compensation to a Company of Rangers, commanded by Captain James Bigger.

JANUARY 23, 1824.

Read, and ordered to lie upon the table.

FEBRUARY 13, 1824.

Printed by order of the House of Representatives.

The Committee on Military Affairs, to whom was referred the memorial of the General Assembly of Indiana, praying compensation for a company of Rangers, commanded by Captain James Bigger, beg leave to

REPORT:

That the following summary will embrace a correct exhibition of the facts in this case.

It appears that Major General Harrison, by the instructions of the President, and in conformity with the provisions of the act, passed on the 2d of January, 1812, authorizing the President to raise six companies of Rangers, mustered into service, on the 29th of May, 1813, Captain Bigger's company of Mounted Rangers, composed mostly of citizens of the state of Indiana, to the number of about one hundred: that this company continued to discharge the duty of *Mounted* Rangers, from the 29th of May, 1813, to the 28th of February, 1814, and that, from the 28th of February, 1814, to the 13th of March, 1814, they were ordered to be considered as *dismounted* Rangers, at which time they were discharged.

It appears, probably from some sudden emergency in the defence of the frontier where this company had been employed, that they were again called into the service on the 1st of June, 1814, and served, as *Mounted* Rangers, to the 31st of May, 1815.

It appears, by reference to the letter of the Third Auditor, on this subject, that this company was regularly paid as *Mounted* Rangers, from the 29th of May, 1813, to the 28th of February, 1814; and as *dismounted* Rangers, from the 28th February, 1814, to the 13th

March, 1814: and that they were likewise paid, from the 1st of June, 1814, to the 31st of May, 1815, as Mounted Rangers. It would thus seem, that this corps has been fully paid, for the time they were actually in service.

The memorial however, prays that Captain Bigger's company may be paid as Mounted Rangers, from the 28th February, 1814, to the 13th March, 1814: likewise, that they may be paid as Mounted Rangers, from the 13th of March, 1814, to the 31st of May, 1815.

In regard to the first prayer of the memorial, your committee are unanimously of opinion, that there is nothing beyond the unavoidable contingencies of the service, in which these Rangers were engaged, that justifies their being paid as Mounted Rangers, when they had been dismounted by order of an officer clothed with competent authority.

In regard to the second prayer of the memorial, that this company should be paid between the 13th of March, 1814, and the 1st of June, 1814, at the former of which period, they had been discharged by an officer of competent authority, on the ground that this was not a discharge, but operated as a furlough, your committee think, that the subjoined letters will be considered as conclusive on this point. A whole company on furlough for an indefinite period, is an anomaly, we believe, unprecedented in military operations.

Your committee, therefore, unanimously recommend the adoption of the following resolution, which was offered at the last session by the Committee on Military Affairs—a proposed rejection of the petition on the part of Captain Bigger's Rangers.

“Resolved, That the prayer of the petitioners ought not to be granted.”

VINCENNES, 4th March, 1814.

SIR: Agreeable to orders I have recently received from General Harrison, all the Rangers in Indiana are dismounted, on the last day of February, 1814, and your whole company, together with Captain Bigger's, is disbanded, to take effect from this date.

It will be necessary for your whole company to proceed to this place, as soon as possible, to be mustered out of service, and to receive such pay as the paymaster may have on hand for them.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W. RUSSELL,

Col. 7th, and District Commandant.

N. B. I have written to you so that you may forward on these letters to Dunn, and Bigger, as soon as possible, by one of your men, so that arrangements can be made by yourself and the captain

to have them on to this place as early as possible. You will also give the necessary instructions, to have Captain Bigger's letter forwarded on to him without delay.

I am, your's, &c.

W. R.

Lieut. RESTINE,
*United States' Rangers,
Indiana Territory.*

VINCENNES, *14th March, 1814.

SIR: Agreeably to orders I have recently received from General Harrison, the Rangers in Indiana are all dismounted on the last day of February, 1814, and your company, together with Capt. Dunn's, is to be discharged, to take effect from this date. It will be necessary for both companies to proceed to this place as soon as possible, to be mustered out of service, and to receive such pay as the paymaster may have on hand for them.

I am, very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

W. RUSSELL,

Col. 7th, and District Commandant.

Capt. JAMES BIGGER,
*United States' Rangers,
Indiana Territory.*

* The date of this letter has been *erased* and altered after written.

